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133 they form rapids, the waters precipitating themselves down deep, rocky gorges and chasms, choked with huge boulders. Some of these gorges are very beautiful; the streams, being hemmed in between stupendous mountains and rocks covered with primeval forest, run in narrow but very deep channels swarming with fish. No islands or lakes are formed by any of the rivers, although several of them have large, deep pools. They are all unfordable during the rains.

312 UTILIZATION OF THE WATER SUPPLY.—None of the rivers are utilized as a motive power for turning machinery, although the streams on the higher plateaux might be easily turned to such an account. Their waters, however, are extensively used for the purposes of irrigation, and the hill people display great ingenuity in cutting channels or aqueducts for leading the water on to their fields. It is in this manner that the Civil Station of Shillong [365] receives its water supply. Aqueducts convey water to the houses of all the European residents; and branch channels from the main aqueduct flow through the *Bázár*, and along the streets occupied by the native inhabitants. No fishing towns exist in the hills; but [226] near where the rivers debouch upon the plain are some valuable [563] fisheries, which are annually let in farm, the lessees being generally Bengálís. These fisheries yield an annual Government revenue of about £300. Embankments in order to protect the land against floods do not exist. A few embankments, or rather dams, are thrown across narrow valleys between hills, so as to create reservoirs for water. At Shillong there are a few tanks thus formed, which are both useful and ornamental.

135 MINERALS, ETC.—Coal and limestone, both of excellent quality, are found in abundance. Lower Bengal obtains nearly the whole of its lime supply from the Khásí and Jáintiá Hills. The lime is known as 'Sylhet lime,' and is obtained by quarrying from the beds of stone which line the base of the mountains along the whole length of the Sylhet boundary. The supply is literally inexhaustible. Coal out-crops at Cherrá Púnjí, Lá-ká-dong, Shellá, Máo-syn-ram, and at several other places; but as a rule it is scattered, and found in places difficult of access. The coal, however, is of excellent quality, and leaves very little ash. Stone, well adapted for building purposes, is also found. Ironstone exists almost everywhere throughout the Hills, but principally in the dependent States of Khyrim, Nongpung, Cherrá, and Mylliem. In former years the Khásís were

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disfigured from the practice. Adults will chew as many as four or five betel-nuts a day, with the usual accompaniment of *pán* leaves. The estimated cost of maintaining an average family of the labouring class is about Rs. 8 or 16s. a month.

TOWNS: SHILLONG.—There are no towns in the usual acceptance of the word; but the chief places in the Hills, looked upon by the inhabitants as cities, are Shillong, Jowái, Cherrá Púnjí, and Shellá. According to the Census of 1871, Shillong had only 1363 inhabitants, Cherrá Púnjí 443, and Jowái 4502. Jowái, however, is a collection of rural hamlets, and the population of Shillong has entirely altered since the date of the Census. The latter place first became the Civil Station in 1864, in substitution for Cherrá Púnjí; and when Assam was erected into an independent Province in 1874, it was selected as the permanent seat of the Local Government. The Chief-Commissioner resides there, and also the heads of all departments in the Administration. The area of the Station is 7 miles in length by 1½ to 1¾ miles in breadth. A considerable native population is already settled, and is increasing from day to day. One of the largest weekly markets is held in the *Aitár*; and with a view to facilitate access to the Station, which is the sanitarium for the Province of Assam, a cart road has recently been completed to Gauhátí on the Brahmaputra, which will tend to make the place more and more important. An excellent water supply is introduced into Shillong through an aqueduct which has its source in the neighbouring hill streams, and sanitary measures are carefully enforced. Large sums of money have annually been expended on the erection of the public buildings necessary for the offices of the administration. A printing-press has been established, from which issue all the official documents and reports of the Province. The climate is excellent, the temperature being more equable than that of any other hill station in India, and therefore admirably suited to the constitution of Europeans. There is a church at Shillong, and a chaplain on the Bengal establishment officiates both there and at Gauhátí. The cantonments were occupied in 1873 by the 43d Regiment of Assam Light Infantry, with three outposts. The strength was 9 European officers, 16 native commissioned officers, 80 non-commissioned officers, 770 fighting men, and 58 paid camp followers and non-combatants; grand total, 933. The total cost, including contingencies, was Rs. 183,190, or £18,319.